Writing Policy Review Process

EVERY CHILD

PROFICIENT & PREPARED FOR
S U C C E S S
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Use of the Writing Policy Guidance Tool

This Writing Policy Guidance Tool (WPG) Tool will be used by teams appointed by district SBDM coordinators to review the writing polices of all the schools in their district and to provide feedback to them.
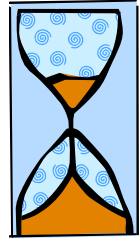
Purposes of the Writing Policy Guidance Tool

- to identify strengths and weaknesses in a school's writing policy
- to give schools a way to self-assess and revise polices before submitting them to district offices

At this time -
Download and print:
X High School Draft Policy

X High School Draft Policy
Writing and Communications Policy

Development and Decision-Making

The school-based decision making council shall

- be responsible for approving and monitoring the school's writing program in accordance with KRS 158.6453 and the Kentucky Core Academic Standards.

A literacy team shall

- be organized to analyze and evaluate strengths and needs of the writing program;
- determine the professional development needs for the program based on that analysis and evaluation and make recommendations to the school administration;
- work collaboratively to develop the school's writing plan. The writing plan shall be a living document revised annually to address changing program needs and changing student needs; and
- report annually to the SBDM council to make recommendations regarding policy.

Communication Skills

At this time -

Download and print:
Writing Policy Guidance Tool annotated for WebEx

Using the *Writing Policy Guidance Tool*

The categories of the *Writing Policy Guidance Tool* are based on the requirements listed in Senate Bill 1 (SB1), 2009. "A school's policy for the writing program shall address the use of the portfolio for determining a student's performance in: **communications, grading procedures and feedback to student regarding their writing and communication skills, the responsibility for review of the portfolios and feedback to students; other policies to improve the quality of an individual student's writing and communication skills.**" SB 1, 2009, Sec 2 (7)(c)(5)

➢ The essential components of each category appear in the left column of the document under the *Description* heading.

➢ The middle column with the heading *Essential items addressed?* includes *yes* and *no* options.

➢ The third column, under the heading, *If no, possible reason,* includes descriptive bullets, plus one *Other* category, to indicate deficiencies not specifically listed in the bullets provided.

When using this tool to identify the strengths and weakness of a school's writing policy -

➢ Read the school's policy.

➢ Highlight *yes* or *no* in the middle column of the *Writing Policy Guidance Tool.*

➢ If *no* is highlighted, move to the third column and highlight the bullet that best describes the contents of the school's plan. (NOTE: The highlighted information will guide the school in determining what is missing from its policy, or what needs to be more specifically articulated.)

➢ A *Comments* space is included at the bottom of each category section for notes or comments that can provide additional feedback or guidance.

"**Each school-based decision making council or if there is no school council, a committee appointed by the principal, shall adopt policies that determine the writing program for its school….**" Senate Bill 1 (SB1), 2009

Programs, Plans, Policies
What's the difference?

Program - includes the **components that will be evaluated in the writing program review process**:

- Curriculum and instruction
- Formative and summative assessments
- Professional development and support services
- Administrative/Leadership support and monitoring

Plan –

a schoolwide writing plan describes the <u>action</u> to be taken by teachers in order to implement the school's writing program, including what will be learned and how it will be assessed

Policy –

the **rules and guidelines adopted by SBDM to be implemented in the school's writing program**

Requirements for the Writing Policy

Senate Bill 1 (March 2009) stipulates the following categories of information that must be covered in the school's writing policy:

Requirements for the Writing Policy

- **Communication Skills**

- **Grading procedures and feedback to students regarding their writing and communication skills**

Requirements for the Writing Policy

- the responsibility for the review of the portfolios and feedback to students

- other policies to improve the quality of an individual student's writing and communication skills

Writing Portfolios for a New Era

Senate Bill 1 (SB1), 2009 states that,

"A school's policy for the writing program shall address the use of the portfolio for determining a student's performance...."

What will be in the portfolio?

Writing portfolios, consisting of samples of individual student work that represent the interests and growth of the student over time shall be a part of any writing program in primary through grade twelve (12).

SB1, 2009

How is the Writing Policy Guidance Tool structured?

the Structure …

- **The essential components of each category appear in the left column under the *Description* heading.**

- **The middle column with the heading, *Essential items addressed?*, includes *Yes* and *No* options.**

Structure (continued)

- **The third column, under the heading, *If no, possible reason,* includes descriptive bullets.**

- **The last column is for schools to use when thinking about how the descriptors are addressed in their writing plan.**

The Writing Policy Review Process for Districts

<u>Districts</u> will review the writing polices required by Senate Bill 1, 2009 and report the results to KDE no later than Feb. 28, 2011.

The Process for District SBDM Coordinators -

1. Establish a district due date for schools to turn in their SBDM-approved writing polices to you.

2. Assemble a district team who will use the WPG Tool to review schools' writing policies.

The Process for District SBDM Coordinators -

3. If a school receives a NO in any category, return the policy for revision. (Be sure to include a new short-term due date.)

4. When the policy is returned to you, review it again to assure that all components stipulated in SB1 have been met.

The Process for District SBDM Coordinators -

5. After the district team appointed by the SBDM coordinator reviews each school's writing policy, the SBDM coordinator will provide feedback to each school using the *Writing Policy Guidance Tool.*

The Process for District SBDM Coordinators -

6. Once all schools' writing policies have been approved by the review team, prepare the report to be sent to Mary Jo Rist at KDE using the spreadsheet form she sent you.

The date all complete reports are due to KDE is Feb. 28, 2011.

The Process for District SBDM Coordinators -

The District SBDM Coordinator will create and maintain an electronic folder for district use of the policies and the feedback document(s) for each school.

<u>Only</u> the Writing Policy report will be sent to Mary Jo Rist.

Basic Steps When Using the WPG Tool

1ˢᵗ - review the school's policy noting the categories and contents.

Next - using the WPG Tool - highlight *Yes* or *No* in the second column of the Tool for each of the categories

If *No* is highlighted -

- **move to the next column and highlight the bullet that best describes the possible reason that essential items are not addressed in the policy.**

- **use the *Other* bullet if the reasons provided do not describe the deficiency in the policy.**

Basic Steps (continued)

A *comments* space is included at the bottom of each category for additional feedback and guidance.

If a school's policy receives a NO in any category -

◈ The school team will revise that portion of the policy.

◈ The school SBDM council will approve the revised policy and send it to the district office by the district-established deadline.

After using the WPG Tool to review a policy or after receiving district feedback, schools should consider -

✓ What revisions are needed to address the deficiency?

✓ Can the deficiency be addressed simply by clarifying language?

At this time -

Pause the WebEx and read X High School's Writing Draft Policy

Refer to the annotated Tool during this part of the WebEx

Applying the Writing Policy Guidance Tool to X School's Draft Policy

Writing Policy Guidance Tool

"Each school-based decision making council, or if there is not a council, a committee appointed by the principal shall adopt policies that determine the writing program for its school and submit it to the Department of Education for review and comment." Senate Bill 1, 2009, Sec 2(7)(c)(2)

#1 - Communication Skills			
"The writing program shall incorporate a variety of language resources, technological tools, and multiple opportunities for students to develop complex communication skills for a variety of purposes." Sec (7)(c)(2)			
Description	**Essential items addressed?**	**If no, possible reason**	**Moving Forward - How is this addressed in our writing plan?**
a. Cross-curricular writing and communication instruction **In the Communication Skills section of X High School's writing policy, it says, "Students shall be actively engaged in using communication skills regularly in every class across all grades and content areas."**	**Yes** **No**	• Not addressed • Suggested cross-curricular writing and communication instruction limits student/teacher choice and/or possibilities for real-world application • OTHER:	

d. Opportunities for students to develop real-world and creative samples of communication appropriate for meeting content standards **In the Communication Skills section of the policy, it says, "Instruction in writing for publication shall be organized to address a variety of audiences and purposes and shall represent the growth and interests of students over time." That same section also indicates that "publication will include writing and delivering speeches, use of multi-media… and electronic/digital publications."**	**Essential items addressed?** **Yes** No	• Not addressed • Suggested opportunities for students to develop communication samples lack real-world authenticity • Suggested opportunities for students to develop communication samples do not support content learning • OTHER:	
Comments: **The policy addresses opportunities for students to use 3 categories of writing: _writing to learn, writing to demonstrate learning and writing for publication_. It's important to keep in mind that a policy aligned with KCAS will include also reference to the three text types addressed in the standards: _argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative._ While writing to learn and writing to demonstrate learning are a part of the learning process, the evidence that students can apply what they are learning will be demonstrated in their collections in authentic text types for authentic audiences and purposes.**			

c. Opportunities for students to self-assess and to provide feedback on the work of others The policy does not address opportunities for students to provide feedback to others.	Essential items addressed? Yes No	• Not addressed • Limited opportunities for students to self-assess • Limited opportunities for students to provide feedback on the work of others • OTHER:	
Comments: The school simply needs to broaden the policy to include student opportunities for providing feedback. Feedback should not just be limited to teachers. It can also include other conference and feedback partners in the school, family and community.			

	items addressed?		How is this addressed in our writing plan?

a. The use of the portfolio as a collection of individual student's work that reflects his or her interests and growth over time in ability to communicate to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes **While the policy does address students writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, it does not directly address the issue of student interest and choice.**	**Yes** **No**	• Not addressed OR parts are not addressed
		• Portfolio collections suggested in policy limit
		   - student choice and interest
		   - authentic forms of communication
		   - opportunities to learn
		• Portfolio collections suggested do not demonstrate variety of audiences and/or purposes
		• OTHER: **Issues of student choice and interest are not addressed in the policy.**	

b. How the portfolio collections will be analyzed to inform whole class and whole school instructional strengths and areas of need for the writing program **The policy indicates that a team will review portfolios regularly to determine instructional planning for the next school year – which is summative assessment. However, in the Portfolio Analysis section of this**	**Essential items addressed?** **Yes** **No**	• Not addressed • Suggested portfolio analysis will not inform classroom instructional needs • Suggested portfolio analysis will not inform school-wide instructional needs • OTHER: **There needs to be a clarifying modification including on-going, formative analysis by all teachers, not just and end-of-year analysis by the literacy team**.	

The Policy Draft in the WebEx-

- is NOT perfect

- has several strengths as well as some deficiencies

- is used to demonstrate <u>how</u> to use the Writing Policy Guidance Tool to determine <u>how</u> a school meets (or fails to meet) the requirements.

Remember

- **The Writing Policy Guidance Tool includes the <u>basic</u> components that <u>must</u> be a part of every school's writing policy.**

- **A school's writing policy may go beyond these components.**

Use the WPG Tool-

- to identify strengths and weaknesses in a school's writing policy

- to self-assess and revise polices before submitting them

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